

# Able to Keep

#0174

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—April 5, 1978

Our text this evening is 2 Timothy 1:8–12. This is the last letter that Paul wrote; he wrote it from the dungeon in Rome shortly before his execution. There's nothing doleful about his final testimony, it breathes courage and cheer.

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day” 2 Timothy 1:8–12.

Isn't that wonderful, friends? This evening, I trust that everyone, as we leave these doors in a little while, will go with that same confidence, that same assurance that filled the heart of the aged apostle there in the dungeon.

“...I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day” 2 Timothy 12.

Some of the other translations give us various shades of thought:

“...I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him” 2 Timothy 1:12 (*New American Standard Bible*).

“...I have no doubt at all that He is able to take care of all I have entrusted to Him” 2 Timothy 1:12 (Reference Unknown).

All of us, day by day, are in situations where we either have to, or we choose to depend upon someone else. Dr. Baldwin was just telling us about this trip. They got in that airplane, flying over the waters; they didn't manage the controls. They sat back, I presume and enjoyed the scenery. Somebody else had the responsibility;

somebody else had been given that job. And they made their *commitment* when they got their tickets and went on the plane. Is that right?

What have you committed to Jesus Christ? What have you turned over to Him? Have you gotten on the plane that's going where He's going? Have you made a commitment? If you have, then you can have the same assurance that Paul had.

But we can readily see, dear friends, that even God can't keep that that we haven't committed to Him, because He's not in the grabbing business. He won't catch us when we're not looking and take it away from us. Anything that you and I give to Him has to be by our own free choice, and He's able to keep that which we've committed to Him.

I've been thinking about some of the things that it's our privilege to commit. I'll just speak in the first person singular number because this is my own testimony tonight with Paul's. I'm putting it in that first person singular number because I want each one of you to identify with that commitment.

I have committed to Him my security. He's looking after me. It's a wonderful thing to have the General Manager of the universe personally responsible for all my affairs.

I was talking with a friend of mine in a distant state, and we were telling about an experience of where the Lord had done something wonderful. I said, "You know, brother, I have an arrangement with the Lord. I look after His problems, and He looks after my problems." He said, "It looks like to me you're getting the best of the bargain," and I agreed.

Isn't it wonderful to have somebody that loves us enough that He wants us to commit our affairs to Him? He *wants* to be responsible for our security?

Brother Fields, before he sang, was referring to the 91 Psalm. Will you turn to that? It's a Psalm of hope, a Psalm of faith, a Psalm of security; it's a Psalm of commitment. Here a thousand years before the birth and death of Christ, these words of hope were put down to be sung by the people of God in all succeeding ages:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flies by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday" Psalm 91:1-6.

Here is security isn't it, friends? Then notice the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> verses.

“For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone” Psalm 91:11–12.

Those who keep the statistics tell us that every 50<sup>th</sup> driver on the highways is drunk, under the influence of alcohol. This is what’s responsible for a lot of these accidents that are happening. I’m so thankful that as I go out on the highways to carry on God’s work and share this message, I have committed my security to Christ.

“Ah but,” somebody says, “Brother Frazee, doesn’t sometimes a drunk driver hit a child of God?”

Yes, sure. But no drunk driver can hit me unless my Heavenly Father sees that it’s best for me to say goodnight at that time. And so I don’t have to drive along if I’m at the wheel or ride along if somebody else is at the wheel, nervous, wondering when something terrible is going to happen to me. *He*—don’t miss it—is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him. He’s able to keep me from accident and harm.

Thank God, He’s able to keep my health. I’ve committed my health to Him. He tells me He’s interested in my health. He’s just as interested in yours. His message to every human being is in that little book of third John 1:2:

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers” 3 John 1:2.

So I’ve put my case in His hands.

Somebody says, “Brother Frazee, does that mean you never get sick?”

No. I still have some lessons to learn. I’m still in school. Sickness can be a wonderful lesson book; some of you’ve found that’s true—haven’t you? It has lessons to teach us about the care of the body that maybe we should have learned before we got sick so we wouldn’t *get* sick. But my dear friends, I say there’s only one thing worse than not using foresight, that’s not *even* using hindsight, what do you say? Yes. [Mild audience laughter] So sickness can be a lesson book. But listen: sickness was never meant to make us worried and fearful and fretful. That’s no way to get well. That’s no way to learn our lessons. Sickness is to teach us the precious privilege of committing our case to Him, and resting in His hands, ready to go, ready to stay, safe in the arms of Jesus. So my health is in His hands. He’s able to keep that which I’ve committed to Him against that day.

I’ve committed to Jesus my reputation. That’s a happy commitment to make, dear friends. He can keep it a lot better than I can. If I’m too busy keeping my own reputation, guarding it, I won’t get done the job that God has given me to do. But He tells me that He is able to keep me from the strife of tongues, to keep me in His pavilion.

“Well,” somebody says, “Brother Frazee, do you mean that your reputation is always good, that people always say nice things about you?”

That isn't what I *said*. Reputation, you know, is not the same as character. Character is what we *are*; reputation is what people *think* we are. And God has not guaranteed that His people in this world will always have a good report about them in the world. Jesus didn't, did He? No. Paul didn't. Jeremiah didn't. James and Ellen White didn't. But I say, it's a blessed thing to leave your reputation in Jesus' hands. He's able to take care of it a lot better than you are.

Paul said I've learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. That's right; happy in the Lord.

I have put in Jesus' hands the matter of my success. Everybody wants to succeed. But worry can be an effectual deterrent, a barrier. Even success is not worth having ulcers, nervous breakdowns, or heart attacks. Many a man has achieved success in business or in some profession only to have his life cut short because of the strain and stress involved in the road he took to get there. It's a wonderful thing, dear friends, to settle it in our hearts that our success has been committed into the hands of Jesus.

Jesus made the greatest success of anyone ever born in this world. But no one ever died a death looking more like a failure than He did at Calvary. But He said in His closing breath: "Father, into Thy hands I commit My life," and that was the spirit of His whole sojourn here. Let's walk with Him that road. What do you say?

In Psalm 127, I find a very interesting statement on this matter of success, and I want to share it with you. Psalm 127, the first verse; the recipe for success:

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" Psalm 127:1.

Success then, *true* success, depends upon partnership between God and man—is that right?

When the psalmist says, "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it," he doesn't mean that if you just pray and turn everything over to the Lord, *He'll* build the house while you sit on a stump or in a chair and watch Him do it. Oh, no. The Bible says very clearly that every house is built by some man. But "except the *Lord* build the house they labour in vain that build it."

So in whatever line of endeavor God has called us, He has called us to fellowship with Him. To do it without Him means failure. To do it *with* Him does not mean that we cease work; it means that we sense our partnership with Him. We commit the job to Him, and we seek to follow His directions. Isn't that a precious privilege?

I heard our good farm manager the other evening telling me about an experience he had in trying to get a motor started. He worked hard at it. Finally, he sent up a prayer to the Lord, and the Lord impressed him with something that needed to be done, and he did it and it went right off. Thank you, brother, for that.

Is God interested in starting motors? Is He interested in practical things? He's so interested in it, friends, that when Christ came down here, took our flesh and tabernacled on earth for a third of a century, He spent most of that time in a carpenter's shop.

That is tremendous in its implication, tremendous in its lesson of how interested God is in common things, and in the success of the common man. And this Carpenter of Nazareth is willing to help us build houses today.

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" Psalm 127:1.

Sometimes I hear people advocate that God looks after everything so we don't need to. But, my dear friends, this text was not meant to teach us that cities should just discharge their watchman any more than they should discharge all their construction engineers.

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" Psalm 127:1.

Oh, what a privilege, whether our job is that of carpenters or watchmen, to work in partnership with Jesus.

Now, this has a very practical application in times when we seem to be not making it successfully. Do you every in the job you're doing, find yourself facing what looks like failure? Take this wonderful statement:

"You may be perplexed in business; your prospects may grow darker and darker, and you may be threatened with loss; but do not become discouraged. Cast your care upon God, and remain calm and cheerful. Pray for wisdom to manage your affairs with discretion, and thus prevent loss and disaster. Do all you can on your part to bring about favorable results. Jesus has promised His aid, but not apart from our effort. When relying upon our Helper, you have done all you can, accept the result cheerfully" *Steps to Christ*, page 122.

Isn't that beautiful? Oh, yes. Thank God for the Christian's hope, that in the dark hour when it seems that everything is a failure, the Christian knows that with God there is no such thing as real failure or loss or impossibility or defeat. From Calvary comes the triumphant cry, "It is finished." Christ planted His banner on the eternal heights. His triumphant note of victory rang out through the universe. And you and I are sharing in that victory tonight, dear friends. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

I've committed my wealth to Jesus.

You say, "Well Brother Frazee, I didn't think you had very much."

Well, the less I have, the more important it is for it to be secure, what do you day? Thank God, I've put it all in His hands. I read a beautiful statement in Volume 9 that thrilled my soul. May I share it with you? :

"Would you make your property secure? Place it in the hand that bears the nail print of the crucifixion. Retain it in your possession, and it will be to your eternal loss. Give it to God, and from that moment it bears His inscription. It is sealed with His immutability. Would you enjoy your substance? Then use it for the blessing of the suffering"  
*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, pages 50–51.*

Oh friends, I thank God that I'm a rich man. Wall Street doesn't know anything about it. No, no. Thank God. I've got something better. But every material thing I have I've committed to Jesus. My automobile belongs to Him; it doesn't belong to me. My money in my wallet doesn't belong to me; it belongs to Him. I have given it to Him. It's His anyway, but He enjoys the courtesy of having it turned over to Him by my choice, friends. It's all His.

And it's so much nicer to ride in His car than if it were mine. It's so much nicer to spend His money than if it were mine. All I have is His, is that your choice?

Well, I have some more things. Perhaps another evening we can share some more, but I think we have enough to digest right now.

I want you to turn back to 2 Timothy 1, and I want you to read that 12<sup>th</sup> verse with me. Remember, Paul's writing from the dungeon. He's not discouraged; everything he has was put on the altar long, long before this. He had been rich; he became poor in the service of Christ. He'd been honored; now he was despised. But oh, he says, I'm not ashamed. Let's read it together:

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" 2 Timothy 1:12

I have no doubt at all that *He* is able to take care of all that I have entrusted to Him. Friends, I propose tonight to turn my entire life, body, soul, and spirit over to Him for now and forever. Do you want to do that same thing? If you would, raise your hand.

[Commitment service follows with short testimonies for commitment.]

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